



MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION
– LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE –

6250 W. Michigan Ave., Suite A ■ Lansing, MI 48917
Tel: 517.886.0881 ■ Fax: 517.886.0882

October 1, 2015

TO: MDE Pupil Transportation Advisory Committee

CC: Kevin Doty, MAPT President

FR: Paul Wegmeyer, Director of Transportation
West Ottawa Public Schools

RE: **MAPT/MDE/MSP-CVED Enhanced School Bus Lighting Pilot Project – October 2015**

The issue of illegal pass bys by motorists is a nationwide pupil transportation problem that is the current #1 top legislative priority for the Michigan Association for Pupil Transportation (MAPT). This issue has not improved in recent times. In fact, nationally collected data suggests that the growing problem of distracted driving by motorists is perhaps making problems even worse for school bus drivers now and into the near future. In addition to illegal pass bys, there is also a national concern about the negative impact of car/bus accidents as a result of distracted motorists striking the rear of school buses at railroad crossings and other routine school bus stops.

To address the issue of illegal pass bys who approach the school bus from behind (roughly 1/3 of all pass by incidents), MAPT along with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Michigan State Police Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division (MSP-CVED) is collaborating on a pilot project to gather data on pass by incidents over a four-week period in Michigan involving 40 school buses in ten (10) Michigan school districts.

The ten (10) school districts in Michigan who will participate in this MAPT/MDE/MSP-CVED pilot project include:

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| 1. Forest Hills Public Schools | 6. Saginaw Township Community Schools |
| 2. Lansing School District | 7. Traverse City Area Public Schools |
| 3. Mason Public Schools | 8. Van Buren ISD |
| 4. Novi Community School District | 9. Wests Ottawa Public Schools |
| 5. Ravenna Public Schools | 10. Zeeland Public Schools |

The first two weeks of data collection will be to record the number of motorists who pass the school bus illegally from all directions. After this data collection period, fleet mechanics in participating school districts will have a week to enhance school bus lighting by installing a new Model 7500 Driver Alert sign on the rear door of selected school buses. The final two weeks of data collection will be to record the number of motorists who continue to pass the bus illegally. Data collection forms, similar to national pass by data collection tools, have been provided for each day of data collection.

The following are key dates in the statewide pilot project:

- 09/28-10/02/15 – Week #1 of data collection: Without use of Driver Alert Sign
- 10/05-10/09/15 – Week #2 of data collection: Without use of Driver Alert Sign
- 10/12-10/16/15 – Installation week for Driver Alert signs: No data collection
- 10/19-10/23/15 – Week #3 of data collection: With use of Driver Alert Sign
- 10/26-10/30/15 – Week #4 of data collection: With use of Driver Alert Sign



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Throughout the data collection period, school bus drivers are asked to drive their bus route – normally – as they would any day of the school year. The test will be to see if the Driver Alert sign makes the school bus “even more conspicuous than it already is” in the attempt to reduce or eliminate the occurrence of passing the school bus illegally from behind while performing a routine bus stop on AM, mid-day and PM bus routes in Michigan.

A key upcoming date for this pilot project will occur at Ravenna Public Schools on Friday, October 16, 2015.

Representative Holly **Hughes** (R-Montague) will be on hand for a press conference to introduce the pilot project to statewide media. Ravenna is the home community of the Privacky family who tragically lost their children in a rear school bus/car accident on December 14, 2011 in the Coopersville, Michigan area. A statewide media release on the MAPT/MDE/MSP-CVED Enhanced School Bus Lighting Pilot Project will be released concurrently.

A final meeting of the Enhanced School Bus Lighting Pilot Project’s steering committee will occur at the MAPT office on November 20, 2015. Future legislative and/or regulatory changes to enable the installation of the Driver Alert sign on new and retrofitted school buses in Michigan will be considered. Data gathered from the pilot project will be included in the 2016 round (Part II) of the Supervisor’s Continuing Education course under the supervision of Mac Dashney and the Training Agency Association of Michigan (TAAM).

Thank you for the opportunity to present information in advance of organized publicity for this unique pupil transportation pilot project in Michigan.